



March 6, 2023

Testimony on S.B. 1016 “An Act Concerning Truth in Advertising by Healthcare Providers”

Esteemed Leadership & Members of the Public Health Committee,

Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Academy of Physician Associates for S.B. 1016 “An Act Concerning Truth in Advertising by Healthcare Providers.” ConnAPA is in opposition to this bill as it’s current form.

ConnAPA agrees that transparency is paramount in healthcare. Every patient has the right to know who on the healthcare team is caring for them, and each provider of healthcare has an ethical obligation to be clear in their role. However, it is unclear what problem this bill is attempting to address. It is not evident that there is a problem in Connecticut of misrepresentation of professions. As well, this bill speaks to two professions, physicians and nurses, but does not speak broadly to other licensed healthcare professions in Connecticut. There are already existing statutes that address misrepresentation, for example:

- Chapter 946, Section 53-341 which speaks to representation as a physician (and is actually problematic in its current form as it is unclear as it protects the term “doctor” and “Dr.”, which are both routinely used by other professionals outside of Chapter 370—such as dentist, psychologists, optometrists, chiropractors, etc.)
- Chapter 370, Sections 20-12b & 20-12d(c) which protect the title of physician assistant and ensure that PAs do not misrepresent themselves
- Chapter 378, Sections 20-94a, 20-95, 20-96 which protect spell out qualifications for the titles of Advanced Practice Registered Nurse, Registered Nurse and Licensed Practice Nurse
- Chapter 379, Section 20-107 which speaks to what qualifies a dentist

These highlights are just a sampling to show that each licensed healthcare professional in Connecticut already has statutory language to protect its profession from imposters or misrepresentation.

ConnAPA has attempted to work with this Committee for a number of years to REDUCE administrative burdens that do not protect patients, and add time and cost to the healthcare system. While the Committee has not taken up such a requested bill on behalf of ConnAPA this year, S.B. 1016 does the opposite of what ConnAPA sets out to do with the implementation of various requirements that will add additional burden and cost to a healthcare system in Connecticut that is already inadequately funded and administratively strained. Most licensed healthcare professionals are licensed yearly. Thus, a requirement to essentially replace badges yearly to reflect licensure expirations would be a tremendous burden on hospital systems and small practices from both a time and cost standpoint, as the badges in most systems are not simple pieces of plastic, but devices that provide access to locations, electronic record systems, and more. The language also makes it unclear as to whether hours and providers need to be displayed within a hospital setting, where some of that information could change daily.

Again, the Connecticut Academy of Physician Associates supports transparency in healthcare, but we also feel that mechanisms are already in place to do so. Adding additional, unclear requirements is not benefiting patients and is attempting to address a problem that has not been shown to exist. Instead it will

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add cost and burden to the system, taking away valuable resources that could otherwise be used to provide care to the patients of Connecticut.

ConnAPA would be happy to work with this legislative body and other stakeholders on this issue if it is deemed that indeed there is a larger issue of misrepresentation that needs to be addressed more formally. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

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